THE GHOST.

N° IX.

FAIRYLAND, SATURDAY, *May* 21. 1796.

I devote this Number to Dr PUFFINANDO.

LECTURE IV.

THE next branch of our Art to which I ſhall have the honour to requeſt your attention, is the *Puff-Theatrical.* But this department is ſo extenſive, that I ſhall reſerve for a particular Lecture its progreſs and preſent ſtate in the Theatres-Royal of theſe kingdoms, and for the preſent content myſelf with laying before you an exact ſpecimen of the literary embelliſhments of thoſe gentlemen who attract the notice of the Public to each of the three Minor Theatres of London.

JONES's CIRCUS.

" The Royal Circus in St George's Fields promiſes a moſt ſucceſsful ſeaſon to Meſſ. Jones. Never did ſuch a Company perform at an Ex-Theatre-Royal; which is at once a proof of the taſte, liberality, and aſſiduity of the Managers. When we conſider the incomparable performance of Smith, the firſt Equeſtrian in the world, and the ſuperior excellence of the horſemanſhip in general at this charming Theatre, the elegance of the Dances, the admirable ſelection and exquiſite performance of the Muſic, the beauty of the Scenery, the merits of the Pantomimes, the claſſical language and attic wit of the Burlettas, and, above all, the glorious ſport of the Celebrated Real Poney Races, the Circus muſt be allowed to leave all competition at a diſtance."

ASTLEY's.

" The new Performances at Aſtley's Amphitheatre of Arts, of which ſo much has been ſaid, ſo much is ſaying, and much more is expected to be ſaid, are in every one's mouth. In our opinion, Aſtley is the moſt ſurpriſing man in the world. That his preſent entertainment affords a ſtriking proof of the aſſertion, muſt be allowed by all who have beheld it; and thoſe who have not, will hardly remain long in doubt."

SADLERS WELLS.

" EASTER MONDAY. This favourite Holiday of the orderly and induſtrious was commemorated at Sadlers Wells, as uſual, by an ample ſhow of Amuſement, which effectually ſecured to this favourite Theatre its accuſtomed ſuperiority in numbers of Holiday Viſitors, and made Iſlington once more all alive. An admirable new Pantomime, in which a well-known Oriental Tale was charmingly repreſented, at once delighted and aſtoniſhed the many, while the Learned beheld with admiration the *Coſtume* and Manners of the Eaſt obſerved with an accuracy and correctneſs hitherto unknown to the Stage. In ſhort, a more grand and exquiſitely beautiful ſpectacle was never brought forward. Here, and here only, ought Harlequin to brandiſh his wooden ſword. Here the world can hardly conceive the aſtoniſhing metamorphoſus performed by the Motley Hero to be leſs than the real effects of Enchantment. Of the Dances it is impoſſible to ſpeak in terms equal to their excellence.

" It is not the leaſt merit of the Sadlers Wells Managers, that their Entertainments are announced to the Town with a degree of modeſty and decency, which always ſecure the patronage of taſte and faſhion, and gives that Theatre more the air of a little Opera-houſe than a Summer Show-ſhop. The reſpectable part of the Public do not like to be trumpeted to their Amuſements."

As I am upon Public Amuſements, it would be unpardonable were I to paſs over the Septennial Theatre of St Stephens. And here I muſt regret that ſo congenial a ſubject ſhould not more employ the Puffic pen. Not one ſpecimen of excellence can I find in this branch. The following, copied from the Star, of 6th May 1796, however uſeful it may be at this particular period, is a mere matter-of-fact advertiſement. Good God! how ſhould we feel were the ſubject treated by a Godfrey, a Brodum, or a Charles!

" PARLIAMENTARY INTEREST.

" A Man of Fortune and Character may be introduced to a certain Honourable Situation. Letters from Principals only, ſigned with their real name, addreſſed to W. Randell, Eſquire, at Mr Southern's, Stationer, No. 27. St James's Street, will be attended to."

The *Puff-Military* deſerves next our attention. As the late and preſent wars have rendered it neceſſary, they have amply felt its benefit. And I am happy that I have an opportunity, merely by extracts from one ſpecimen, to ſhow that in this department it is reduced to perfection.

" Wanted a few daſhing, ſpirited, and active Young Men, of good Countenance and Character, for the ———— Regiment of Light Dragoons, under the immediate command of ————————, who invites all Aſpiring, Brave, Courageous, Daring, Enterpriſing, Fine, Gallant, Handſome, Invincible, Jolly, Kind, Loyal, Manly, Noble, Orderly, Proper, Quick, Ranting, Spirited, Tall, Undaunted, Willing, Excellent, Young-Zounds——Heroes bold, who wiſh to ſignaliſe themſelves in Arms for their KING and COUNTRY, have now a Glorious Opportunity. When they join the Regiment, they ſhall be completely equipped with Three New Suits of Superfine Blue Cloaths, richly embroidered, with a Fighting Jacket, ſmart Pantaloons, an elegant Helmit, genteel Feather-cap, neat light Pair of Boots, and Silver Spurs, a ſhining Broad Sword and Carbine, mounted upon a fine Yorkſhire Hunter, fit to challenge any Gentleman Sportſman in this country or the next, and every thing to complete a Gentleman Light Dragoon, to the amount of L. 250 and upwards. As a number of Non-commiſſioned Officers are wanted, Young Men that are Scholars may be aſſured of immediate promotion, and thoſe of Merit will certainly obtain Commiſſions.

" Come, my Lads, who have ſpirit your Country to ſave,
" Repair to the Standard of a Commander ſo brave;
" You'll be led on to Honour and Glory, ne'er fear,
" To withſtand Democrats, and puniſh Mounſeer.

" *N. B.* None but Heroes will be accepted."

The alphabetical enumeration of Military Virtue in the preceding Invitation, is happily imagined, and ſhews a great and comprehenſive mind. The following may be given as a proper appendage.

" SHOOTING REDUCED TO A PERFECT SCIENCE.

" Richard Toomer, of Broomy Lodge in the New Forreſt, Hampſhire, teaches the Art of Shooting, ſo that in Twenty Leſſons, at One Guinea each, his Pupils will with certainty ſhoot Pidgeons flying with a ſingle ball. He alſo inſtructs Gentlemen in the Art of Firing Piſtols in a manner that muſt be highly uſeful to all who may be involved in Affairs of Honour.

Of the *Puff-Aſtrological* I have, in the preceding Lecture, given a brilliant ſpecimen from the Claſſical pen of the Chevalier Clairvoyant, a perfect Conſtellation of Excellence. As leſs luminous, but ſtill bright ſtars, follow, Mrs Stewart and the two Mrs Williamſes—but my time will not permit me to detail the invitations which they give to the Fair and Rich to know their deſtinies. Two of theſe Ladies, it may be obſerved, diſpute which is the real Mrs Williams; but this demonſtrates the unqueſtionable merits of one Mrs Williams in this Celeſtial Science*.

Of the *Puff-Logical* I cannot give a better ſpecimen than from the pen of an eminent Medical Profeſſor, who is an enemy to the uſe of Mercury.

" MERCURY THE MINISTER OF DEATH.

" Whether the ancients had any knowledge of the effects of the mineral called Mercury on the human body, is not aſcertained; but it is remarkable, that the god bearing that name was the univerſal conductor of ſouls to the infernal abodes".

When treating of the *Puff-Coſmetical*, I omitted one ſpecimen which muſt not be forgotten. I truſt it will render univerſal the ineſtimable Powder it announces.

" VALUABLE DISCOVERY.

" A merchant, in his travels, obſerved at a place where he made ſome ſtay, that the people, even the moſt aged, were not grey-haired; and aſking the cauſe, received for anſwer, they had a Powder only known to them, which they uſed from their childhood, that ſo nouriſhed the hair that it never changed or grew thin; and if any omitted uſing it in their youth, and found the hair change or fall off, if they took the Powder, it prevented it growing worſe, and frequently made it better. As they would not be tempted to diſcover what it was made from, he purchaſed a large quantity, and agreed on terms for any farther ſupply he might ſtand in need of; and now offers it to the Public at 5s. 6d. each packet; and appoints it to be ſold at No. 41. Frith Street, Soho."

The Puffic Art has introduced to the tables of the curious many delicacies heretofore unknown. Of theſe my time will only allow one example.

" Two new American Peas—the Wabiſh Great Pea, which is the fineſt in the world, both for its enormous ſize, delicious flavour, and abundant crops—and the Vermont Green Beauty, which is even ſuperior to the Wabiſh, and has never been equalled for beauty when on the table, or delicacy of taſte."

I muſt refer you to the newſpapers for the ſublime compoſitions of the great Mr Charles, Miniature Painter to his Royal Highneſs the Prince of

* Mr Phantom thinks it his duty to inform his Fair Readers, that Mrs Williams of Store Street is the real Mrs Williams, and her rival an impoſtor.

of Wales, in which that ſon of Minerva, after a learned philoſophical diſquiſition on Optics, modeſtly obſerves, " That were it not for his ſuperior knowledge of the nature of colours, his merits as an artiſt would little exceed thoſe of Sir Joſhua Reynolds." Nay, in the concluſion, he does not even claim the palm. " What Sir Joſhua was (ſays he) in large, Charles is in miniature."

It may appear ſurpriſing, that, great as the progreſs has been of this our Art in all ſciences, and in moſt profeſſions, it is by none ſo unſkilfully practiſed as by the Bookſellers. This claſs of men has been not ineptly compared to eunuchs in a ſeraglio, guardians of beauties they cannot enjoy; an obſervation that is here but too well exemplified, their awkward attempts ſhewing how little they profit by the examples under their charge. Their puffs conſiſt of ill-put-together and clumſy expreſſions of—ſplendor—diſtinguiſhed magnificence—decorative excellence —typographical perfection—exquiſite prints, worth three times the price of the book—ſuperfine wove vellum, curiouſly hot-preſſed—and ſo on.—But as no branch of our Art is ſuſceptible of more ſuperb embelliſhments, I propoſe, in a future Lecture, to lay before you ſome new original, and I hope perfect, deſigns of the *Puff-Bibliopical.* In the mean time, I think it juſt to mention, that I have very lately ſeen one ſpecimen, evincing conſiderable genius and ingenuity. It is a new edition of the Holy Bible, " with beautiful Engravings of the principal Perſons in the Old and New Teſtament, from Pictures from the Life, by the firſt Maſters." I am happy alſo to obſerve ſome reſpectable attempts of a northern Manufacturer of Books in a provincial town in Scotland.

Before I conclude this Lecture, I muſt obſerve, that it gives me the moſt heart-felt ſatisfaction to find, that the world profits by my inſtructions. Since the publication of one of my former Lectures in that inimitable Periodical Paper called THE GHOST, I find mankind making a rapid progreſs towards perfection. Dr Brodum, in his late compariſon of the human body to a tea-kettle, has exceeded himſelf; and it is likewiſe a great improvement, that to the laſt Edition of his truly intereſting and valuable Work, dedicated to the King, (which has been tranſlated into the French, German, and Spaniſh languages), there is prefixed " ſo good a likeneſs of the Doctor, as to prevent all that have it in their poſſeſſion from being liable to be deceived by a ſet of impoſtors, who aſſume the Doctor's name and *perſon*, for the purpoſe of more effectually deceiving the Public." Nay, I obſerve even the dawnings of Genius in the city of Edinburgh. As an incitement to emulation, I inſert it entire; and the rather as the modeſty of its author has prevented him from ſending his offspring to the world in a newſpaper, confining it to the walls of a bookſeller's ſhop.—But it ſhall go abroad.

" Mr A. M. (Maſter of Arts, I ſuppoſe) having a few hours every day to ſpare from his own neceſſary ſtudies, wiſhes to employ them in aſſiſting any Gentleman ſtudying Medicine in the peruſal of Select Portions of the Works of Hippocrates, Galen, Celſus, Freind, Gregory, Leber, &c. &c. in acquiring by exerciſe ſuch facility and ſkill in Latin compoſition, as may be requiſite for writing a Memorandum, a Recipe, or a Theſis. The fees required will be moderate and reaſonable."

The climax of a Memorandum !—a Recipe !!—a Theſis !!!—would do honour to an Academy of Inflation. And I ſee alſo another laudable attempt in an eminent Silverſmith, who announces, " Variety paſt deſcription, and Elegance beyond competition."

Sold by G. MUDIE AND SON, South Bridge, Edinburgh; who receive Communications for this Paper, poſt paid, and addreſſed to *Mr Phantom.*——The GHOST may alſo be had of CAMERON AND MURDOCH, Glaſgow, and of S. MURRAY, Ruſſel Court.